

SUPPLEMENTAL AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No. 09/806,613
Attorney Docket No. Q90170

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present Amendment, claims 2-8, 10, 13-21, 26-27, 29-30 and 62-69 are all the claims pending in the application. Independent claim 10 is amended, and new claims 68 and 69 are added. No new matter is presented.

Initially, the undersigned thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended during the personal interview conducted on November 9, 2005. In view of the issues discussed during the interview, Applicant hereby submits the present Supplemental Amendment for consideration by the Examiner. Entry and consideration of the present Supplemental Amendment is believed to expedite the prosecution of the present application and such actions are therefore respectfully requested.

As discussed in the Response filed October 25, 2005, claims 2-8, 10, 13-21, 26-27, 29 and 62 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Corrsin (U.S. Patent No. 3,477,194), claims 2-8, 10, 13-21, 27, 29, 62 and 67 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Muellich (U.S. Patent No. 5,893,959), claims 63-67 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Corrsin in view of Osborne (U.S. Patent No. 4,069,080), and claims 26, 30, and 63-66 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Muellich in view of Osborne.

As demonstrated below, neither Corrsin nor Muellich is believed to teach or suggest all the limitations of independent claim 10. Claim 10, as amended, defines a method of forming a weld between plastics workpieces over a joint region, the method comprising, *inter alia*, exposing the joint region to incident radiation having a wavelength outside the visible range so

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as to cause melting of the surface of one or both workpieces at the joint region, and allowing the melted material to cool thereby welding the workpieces together, the method further comprising providing a radiation absorbing material at the joint region in one of the workpieces or between the workpieces which has an absorption band in the range 780 nm - 1500 nm matched to the wavelength of the incident radiation so as to absorb the incident radiation and generate heat for the melting process, wherein the radiation absorbing material is visually transmissive so that the material does not substantially affect the appearance of the joint or the workpieces in visible light.

Further, claim 10 is presently amended to recite "wherein a weld formed at the joint region by exposure to the incident radiation is visually transmissive in visible light." Therefore, in addition to the arguments presented in the Response of October 25, 2005, Applicant further submits that neither Corssin nor Muellich anticipates or suggests at least this feature of claim 10.

With respect to the rejection of claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Corrsin, Applicant notes that Corrsin teaches the use of carbon to provide an infrared absorber in a welding process. *See*, Corrsin at col. 1, line 40; col. 2, line 35. However, as carbon is opaque to visual wavelengths, the use of carbon as an infrared absorber fails to suggest wherein a weld formed at the joint region by exposure to the incident radiation which is "visually transmissive in visible light," as claimed. Likewise, Corrsin does not disclose absorbers other than carbon containing inks in which a weld formed at the joint region by exposure to the incident radiation is "visually transmissive in visible light." *See* Corrsin at col. 3, lines 52 - col. 4, lines 22.

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In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 10 as being anticipated by Corrsin is requested.

Turning to the rejection of claim 10 as being anticipated by Muellich, Applicant likewise submits that Muellich fails to anticipate all the limitations of claim 10. In addition to the arguments previously discussed in the Response of October 25, 2005, Applicant additionally submits that at least the feature of “wherein a weld formed at the joint region by exposure to the incident radiation is visually transmissive in visible light”, as recited by claim 10, is not disclosed by Muellich.

Rather, Muellich merely teaches the use of laser welding to join workpieces together to produce a resultant structure that provides a “homogenous visual impression, in particular with regard to color.” *See*, Muellich at col. 2, lines 18-21. However, the radiation additives disclosed in the welding method of Muellich are impermeable to light rays. *See*, Muellich at col. 3, lines 3-7. For instance, Muellich teaches that a high absorption is achieved by the use of black dye pigments as a radiation absorbing material. *See, e.g.*, Muellich at col. 7, lines 42-44. The black dye pigments as radiation absorbing material in a laser welding process are clearly opaque. Thus, the radiation absorbing material in the laser welding process of Muellich does not suggest a weld formed at the joint region by exposure to the incident radiation that is visually transmissive in visible light, as recited by claim 10.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 10 as allegedly being anticipated by Muellich is respectfully requested. Turning to the dependent claims, Applicant submits that claims 2-8, 13-21, 26-27, 29-30 and 62-67 are allowable at least by virtue

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of depending from claim 10, which is believed to be allowable at least for the reasons discussed above. Therefore, allowance of claims 2-8, 10, 13-21, 26-27, 29-30 and 62-67 is requested.

New Claims

In order to provide additional coverage merited by the scope of the invention, Applicant is adding new claims 68 and 69, which are believed to be allowable at least by virtue of depending from claim 10. Therefore, allowance of claims 68 and 69 is requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

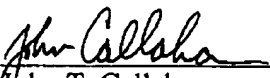
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